



March 24, 2004

Warren pair admit trafficking in counterfeit DVDs

About 10,000 DVDs from China and Malaysia were sold over the Internet

Carlos Oliviera and **Paul LaChance**, both of Warren, pleaded guilty today to copyright infringement, admitting that they trafficked in approximately 10,000 counterfeit DVDs that they obtained from suppliers in China and Malaysia. Oliviera and LaChance sold the counterfeit DVDs over the Internet from a business on Metacom Avenue, Warren.

The Office of the United States Attorney announced the guilty pleas, which Oliviera and LaChance entered today before Senior U.S. District Court Judge Ronald R. Lagueux in U.S. District Court, Providence. Oliviera, 32, of 43 Franklin Street, Warren, and LaChance, also 32, of 161 Vernon Street, Warren, are free on unsecured bond pending sentencing, which is scheduled for June 8.

At the plea hearing, Assistant U.S. Attorney Andrew J. Reich said that, had the case gone to trial, the government would have proven that, beginning in November 2002, the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) seized numerous packages containing counterfeit DVDs from international mail facilities in the U.S. The packages were from Malaysia and China and were addressed to Carlos Oliviera at a business address at 338 Metacom Ave., Warren.

On March 14, 2003, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents and Postal inspectors executed a federal search warrant at 338 Metacom Avenue and seized numerous counterfeit DVDs, as well the company's business records.

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Federal agents developed evidence that the defendants purchased DVDs, including counterfeit DVDs, from various suppliers, including suppliers in Malaysia and China. After receiving the counterfeit DVDs, the defendants sold them over the Internet.

Based on an analysis of the defendants' business records and of money wire transfers made from their business to Asian suppliers, agents estimate that the defendants trafficked in approximately 10,400 DVDs. Assistant U.S. Attorney Reich said that, based on the Motion Picture Industry Association of America estimated retail value of a DVD at \$19.00, the total copyright infringement by the defendants was approximately \$197,600.00.

Oliviera and LaChance pleaded guilty to conspiracy to infringe copyrights for commercial gain by distributing ten or more copies of copyrighted works during a six-month period. The statutory maximum penalty is five years imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the amount of gain or loss. Federal sentencing is determined on the basis of guidelines that take into account such factors as the specific nature of an offense and a defendant's criminal background, if any.

The **Bureau of Customs and Border Protection**, the **Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement** and the **U.S. Postal Inspection Service** investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Reich is prosecuting it.

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